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Mission is a constant call to the peripheries – Pope Francis

Pope Francis has given his approval for an extraordinary 'month of mission' in 2019 to reinvigorate and renew the missionary spirit and action of the Church.

October 2019 was chosen for the month of prayer because it will be the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's 1919 apostolic letter, *Maximum Illud* on the propagation of the faith throughout the world. "In this very important document...on mission, the Pope [Benedict XV] recalls how necessary a life of holiness is for the effectiveness of the apostolate," Pope Francis said.

Zeal

Now more than ever the Church and the world need men and women known for their "zeal and holiness" to proclaim the Gospel and show mercy to everyone, he added.

"The world vitally needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ,"

the Pope wrote in his message for World Mission Sunday 2017.

"Through the Church, Christ continues his mission as the Good Samaritan, caring for the bleeding wounds of humanity, and as the Good Shepherd, constantly seeking out those who wander along winding paths that lead nowhere," the Pope wrote in the message.



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a lofty ethical teaching," he wrote. Rather it is sharing the transformative power and joy of Christ and his word, which helps people become free of selfishness, "narrowness, conflict, racism and tribalism."

"The Church's mission impels us to undertake a constant pilgrimage across the various deserts of life, through the different experiences of hunger and thirst for truth and justice," and inspires the faithful to be in "constant exodus" toward the peripheries and in "constant exile" toward the kingdom of heaven.

Welcoming a proposal from the pontifical mission societies and the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, the Pope said the special concentration on mission during the month of October 2019 would help "renew the love and passion" of proclaiming the Gospel to everyone.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

22 OCT 2017

Sunday 22nd October 2017 is World Mission Sunday and the Holy Father invites all Catholics to contribute to a special collection. Every person in every parish in every country where the Church is present will be celebrating together and sharing what they have, no matter how little. It is the one Sunday in the year when the Mass is celebrated exclusively for missionary activity. Donations are collected at these worldwide Masses and they go to support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor. It is also the one Sunday in the year when your generosity goes directly to help mission parishes overseas and reach out with Jesus' message of hope and love. World Missions Ireland is the Holy Father's official charity for overseas mission. It is responsible for coordinating Mission Sunday in Ireland and, through local bishops, churches, and missionary congregations around the world ensures that resources are distributed equitably and justly on the basis of need. In offering our prayers, we join with missionaries everywhere in communion and compassion to support them in spreading the Good News, and by giving a donation we respond to Christ's call to feed the hungry and clothe the naked so please give what you can.

Thank You

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Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles



“Some give by going to the missions. Others go by giving to the missions. Without both, there are no missions” – **St. Therese of Lisieux**

Whether as a Religious or a lay person, each one of us is called to serve. That call continues to be answered in Ireland today. Here we share some stories of those who give by going on mission and others who go by giving.

The legacy of the early missionaries who ‘gave by going’...

The first OLA missionaries went to Nigeria, 140 years ago, in 1877. Among the international group to scatter the original mustard seeds were Sr. Dominique Riordan from Cork and Sr. Felicite Kirwan from Dublin. Both died shortly afterwards from the deadly yellow fever for which there was no cure at the time.

They were followed by many others including two siblings from Bruree, Co. Limerick. In March 1884, Sr. Ignatius Howard helped open the first school for girls in Ghana (then known as Gold Coast).

After her death in 1892, her younger sister, Sr. Jean, took up the baton. Sr. Jean also died at a young age but by then the roots of education for girls had taken hold across Ghana and further afield.

Medical science improved greatly in the early 1900's, making the tropics less deadly. Sr. Aquiline Tobin was one of the many missionaries of her time who ‘gave by going’.

The redoubtable Déise native arrived in Ghana in 1911. While she herself had only received primary level schooling, Sr. Aquiline felt education was the way of the future. On discovering that Ghana had just one teacher training school which was for exclusively for men, Sr. Aquiline began a teacher training college for women. Soon after, the newly graduated teachers took up roles in the OLA



Pupils of the OLA English Medium Primary School pictured alongside the new school bus.



Mary Mullarkey with children of the OLA English Medium Primary School in Bugisi, Tanzania.

schools which were opening up to cater for the increasing demand for education.

What is the legacy of all early missionaries? They inspired the next generation of teachers while thousands of girls also received a quality education.

The tiny mustard seeds scattered all those years ago have grown strong with branches stretching far and wide. Now, new waves of international OLA missionaries continue to sow those mustard seeds that will reach out to those in need across the world.

Among these is Sr. Juliana Fayad (photo at right), a fluent Arabic speaker from Lebanon, who is now a missionary in Ireland. She is supporting Arabic speaking refugees from Syria and other countries who are in Ireland – an example of missionaries responding to the realities of today's world.

Our lay volunteers who ‘give by going’

Another reality today is the desire of young people,

among others, to leave a positive imprint on the world and on others. Every year, volunteers from Ireland travel to OLA mission areas. Mary Mullarkey, from Co. Mayo, volunteered in Tanzania for 3 months last Spring. Did she feel she made a difference?

“I feel I did. A few moments come to mind. I will share one with you. Kashinja was ten years of age and had scoliosis. We got to know each other quite well. We used to play ball together and have great fun. I can still see the big smile on her face. She appreciated the time and interaction I think. If

I achieved nothing else during my time here, this single experience alone made it completely worthwhile.”

There are also other ways to make a difference in the world without leaving these shores and the impact can just be as powerful.

Those who go by giving

As St. Therese points out, we can also ‘go by giving’ and this is something which the Irish do very well.

Great song and dance reverberated through the rural heartlands of northern Tanzania, East Africa, last month as a shiny new yellow school bus rolled up outside the OLA English medium primary school in Bugisi Parish.

The Sisters in Bugisi described the new bus as ‘revolutionary’ given that the 35 villages in the parish are dotted across some 70 km. Until recently, many of the pupils boarded at the OLA school as they lived up to 15 km away and had no access to transport to and from the school.

According to Sr. Anne McCormack, OLA the new school bus, funded thanks to donations from Ireland, means that ‘many children can now make the daily commute to receive a quality education, families will no longer have to pay boarding costs and young children can live at home with their families’.

Supporting Nigerian rosaries appeal

The Irish spirit of generosity



Parishioners of the Diocese of Sokoto with rosaries from Ireland. Photo: Fr Onuh Sixtus.

also touched the hearts of a Nigerian community over the summer.

In honour of the centenary celebrations of Our Lady of Fatima, mass Rosary Rallies were to be held across Nigeria. Rosaries were needed for the initiative and the Bishop of Sokoto Diocese contacted the OLA Sisters. In June 2017, a call went out for assistance with this special appeal. The people of Ireland answered the call by donating over 5,500 rosaries.

The response was ‘staggering’, according to Sr. Julie Doran, OLA who also noted that ‘we never imagined such a return with so many rosary beads crossing from hands in Ireland and England to praying hands in Nigeria.’

Weeks later, the rosaries were on their way to the faithful in the Nigerian Diocese of Sokoto where 38,000 Catholics make up 0.3% of the population in the region. The faithful of Sokoto Diocese remarked upon the fact that people in a far off land would go to such lengths for people that they do not know – the essence of mission.

St. Therese's call for us to be missionary continues. Our acts of charity today help shape a bright tomorrow for others.

About us...

The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles were founded in 1876 by Fr. Augustine Planque, SMA for the formation, education and the betterment of the life of the African woman.

We dedicate our lives to the spread of the Gospel especially in Africa by:

- The witness of our lives,
- The sharing of our Faith and through our missionary works in education,

health care delivery, social and pastoral works, justice and peace issues, the care of the environment, and inter-religious and trans-cultural dialogue.

www.olaireland.ie

Interested in volunteering overseas? Email: volunteering@olaireland.ie
Do you feel God is calling you to be an OLA Sister? Email: vocations@olaireland.ie

The Redemptorists in Mozambique



Fr Eridian Goncalves CSsR
and Br. Jean Carlos Lima
CSsR

The most recent Irish Redemptorist foreign mission is in a small corner of the large land of Mozambique in South East Africa. Formally titled "The Sancta Maria dei Monti Mission" after the place where St Alphonsus and his companions preached their first mission, it is a joint undertaking by Irish, Brazilian and Argentinian Redemptorists. Two Brazilian confreres describe the day to day reality of life there...

The Redemptorists began their mission in the southern part of Mozambique 15 years ago with the arrival of the first six Argentinian Redemptorists, who took on the work of parish ministry and specific projects to help orphan children.

In 2011, the Irish and Brazilian Redemptorists made a decision to begin working in the north of the country in a parish close to the Mozambique – Malawi border. In total, ten Redemptorist priests and seven students now contribute to this combined missionary effort, as well as a large team of lay people who spearhead parish initiatives and support the work of evangelisation.

The mission

The Redemptorist tradition going back to St. Alphonsus states that our Congregation should go and minister in places where no one else wants to go. Our mission here in Mozambique is in the diocese of Tete, where we assist more than 100 communities. Our pickup truck has taken a battering over the years as we try to reach places and families in extremely remote areas.

“Confidence and trust in young people is certainly the best tool for transforming a society”

Our rainy season lasts on average between four and five months: this can make travel by road extremely dangerous. Sometimes, we have to use a motorbike to reach the more remote areas. Travel is not without its risks, challenges and sacrifices, so every journey needs to be carefully planned.

What gladdens our hearts is that when we eventually reach our destination, the Christian families welcome us with smiles and show how delighted they are to see us. We usually stay in these areas for a couple of days or more.

Along with our catechists, we



Bro. Jean Carlos with students.



The Redemptorist students are pictured with Fr Dan Baragry CSsR.



The local football team.



Bro. Jean Carlos and Fr Eridian with parishioners.

celebrate the sacraments and respond to more personal needs when required. We are here in Mozambique because these people are the most isolated in Eastern Africa and it is a real honour for us to be working among them.

The Young People

In the last census carried out in 2007, 50.01% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 64, and 46.09% between 0 – 14 years old. In other words, this is a country where life expectancy is around 55-60 years of age. Like everywhere else in the world, the young people of our village have

many different dreams, but the way to their fulfilment is often blocked by the extreme poverty in which they live.

However, it is not all bleak. Confidence and trust in young people is certainly the best tool for transforming a society, because from them, there is a possibility of building something new. Little by little, with the development of new forms of communication and media and a growing awareness of the political and social issues of the country, young people are slowly beginning to assume their role in the building up of Mozambique.

Men and Women – two disconnected worlds

There is a strongly established segregation of the sexes in our village of Furancungo. We could take our church as an example. At Mass on Sunday, men sit on the right side of the church, and the women on the left: the collection at Mass is divided according to gender – first the men, and then the women.

When a boy enters puberty, he is obliged to build a small room outside the family home where he will live until he gets married. If they have the chance of an education, they are forced to

move a long way from home, and usually to live in a place where a school already exists. They start looking for work early, be it in the fields, in commerce or in some multinational company.

If it is difficult for men, it is even harder for women. On them fall the burdens of daily life. They must fetch water, care for the children who will inherit only the family name of the father, prepare food, clean the house, work in the fields: this they do day after day with little by way of a break.

Communication – a means of transformation

As the saying goes, "No man is an island," and this clearly conveys the positive side of globalization. As digital communication dawns in Mozambique, it has given young people the opportunity to see themselves and the world with different eyes, and it has opened up to them a totally different reality.

As you walk through our pastoral area, what is most noticeable is the large number of communications masts. Mobile telephones, internet, radio and television – all contrast with the reality of the place.



Fr Dan washes feet during Holy Thursday liturgy.

From the cities to the most isolated places, it is gradually becoming possible to connect with what is happening elsewhere in Mozambique and the rest of the world, albeit to a limited extent. There are places where there is no electricity and no water, but there is a communication tower.

Young people are massively benefiting from by these technological advances. They are the tools that supply the shortcomings and material limitations of the place where they live.

Books, movies, magazines, and other information media contribute to the intellectual, cultural and personal growth of each. The old stereotype of Africa is gradually being left behind.

● **Fr. Eridian and Bro Jean Carlos are Brazilian Redemptorists working alongside Irish and Argentinean Redemptorists in Mozambique. The article was translated by Fr Derek Ryan CSsR and featured in the October edition of Reality magazine.**

Get involved!

MISSION IS AT the heart of the Redemptorist charism, wherever they are and whatever ministry they are involved in. You can support the mission of the Redemptorists in many ways. To continue our mission, we need your help.

Give – your donation will make a difference. You can support our efforts to promote vocations, educate our student brothers and priests, secure our ministries in Ireland, or sustain and develop our foreign missions. Please contact us for more information: by email provincial.secretary@redemptorists.ie, by telephone (01) 4067277, or by post: Redemptorist Mission Appeal, Redemptorists Ireland, Unit A6 Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9.

Pray – the mission and ministries of the Redemptorists are centered on a living relationship with the Most Holy Redeemer, Jesus Christ. This is sustained and nourished by prayer. You can support our mission by committing to pray for Redemptorist missionaries at home and abroad, our co-workers and those we serve.

Join – the life of a Redemptorist missionary brother and priest is one that is fulfilling, challenging and oriented towards serving God's people, especially those on the peripheries. We need men to take up the invitation to become members of our community to preach "plentiful redemption". Contact us by email Fr.Noel.Kehoe@redemptorists.ie or by phone +442890445950.

The SMA Missionary Family Working for Africa in Ireland



In August 2018, the World Meeting of Families takes place in Ireland, a location apparently favoured in part by the rich missionary tradition of the Irish Church. That missionary tradition finds echoes in Pope Francis' call for a Church that is outward looking, going to the margins and witnessing to love and compassion, justice and mercy. In reality, family life is the bedrock for those values, witnessing to God's love in the nuts and bolts of everyday life.

The Society of African Missions (SMA) is the heart of an extended Missionary Family whose members play a vital and active role as missionaries in their everyday lives here in Ireland.

This family goes back to the earliest SMA presence in Ireland in 1878, and became more structured in 1959 with the formation of the Family Vocations Crusade, now the **Family Vocations Community (FVC)**.



FVC Members at the annual SMA Pilgrimage to Knock

Its 14,000 members actively participate in spreading the Gospel, enabling the formation of missionary priests in and for Africa by contributing to their education, providing spiritual support and communicating with the African Houses of Formation.

In addition to supporting SMA projects in Nigeria and Zambia, the **SMA Lay Association (SMALA)**, is now committed to a new project initiated by the SMA Tanzania Region. They are educating others about the struggles Albino people face and raising awareness of their persecution. They are also

raising funds to support the building of a home for abandoned Albino children, allowing them to complete their education and eventually secure employment.

The **Friends of Africa (FOA)** is a young adults group which has been actively engaged in mission for almost 20 years. In addition to providing financial support and other resources to SMA and African projects, FOA volunteers go to Zambia, Tanzania and South Africa each summer to work directly in mission activities. They also give their time and energy, together with the Core Group of **Dromantine**



SMALA works to protect African Albino Children



FOA volunteers en route to Tanzania

Summer Camps to introduce 500 girls and boys to aspects of the SMA mission and Africa during the school holidays.

Across Ireland, a group of dedicated volunteers promote and collect **Mission Boxes**, the funds from which support the work of those Irish SMA members who are still working in Africa. Undertaking lengthy journeys around their various areas to service the boxes, many are engaged in the administration necessary to record and acknowledge the monies received.

Promoters of the **Mission Association Cards** are located throughout Ireland, providing many with access to cards for bereavement, thanksgiving, illness and various special intentions for their extended families and neighbours. A source of contact and support, especially at times of great need, promoters simultaneously raise awareness of the work of the SMA.

The recently trained **Climate Justice Volunteers** are making a significant contribution to the

promotion of climate justice by delivering the Thumbprint Campaign in schools and parishes across the country. With climate change and the increased pollution from industrialised countries like Ireland impacting directly on Africa, education and awareness raising on this issue is a vital part of the SMA mission.

Each aspect of the SMA Missionary Family is engaged in its own area of work; each is greatly valued and appreciated. But the value and strength of each piece is further enhanced by the shared focus on and commitment to Africa. The impact of so much giving and caring is greater because of the combined activity of women and men who may never go to Africa, but who constitute the SMA Missionary Family, witnessing to the call to be missionary everyday in their lives, in their homes and communities.

"Christian families are missionary families, in their everyday life, in their doing everyday things, as they bring to everything the salt and the leaven of faith!"

Pope Francis



If you are interested in becoming a member of any part of the SMA Missionary Family: the Family Vocations Community (FVC), the SMA Lay Association (SMALA), Friends of Africa (FOA), a Mission Box Volunteer, a Climate Justice Volunteer or if you want to know more about the Dromantine Summer Camps, please contact laity@sma.ie

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Celebrating 100 Years of Columban Missionaries

Mission in Fragmentation

"I have come that you may have life and have it in abundance" (John 10-10)

In the old world of European empires the mission of the church travelled with the expansive energy of empire as it did previously in the age of trade routes and great migrations by land and sea. Today we live in a de-territorialised world of nation states each having its local church commissioned to be witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The question is; how does the Christian Church, the Christian community, the individual Christian, carry out mission in an urbanising, migrating, and many would add fragmenting world of great wealth and great want?

Firstly, the role of the Church is to be in the witness box, not on the judge's bench. The first stage of mission is engagement in a spirit of welcoming dialogue with those whose lives are diminished by obstacles in the external or internal landscapes of their lives.

Secondly, witness has to be visible in relevant service to enhance the quality of life in the political, social, economic and cultural networks of people's lives.

Thirdly, witness demands standing with people not as a spectator, walking with them in active commitment confronting issues that are wounding their souls on their journey of hope. Migrants should be reminders that our hearts are on a journey



of hope. God is present in the hope of the human faces. Agents of mission are challenged to match that hope.

Fourthly, authentic Christian mission activity

must be asking why people are homeless, migrants, on the margins, afraid, exploited, unwanted, ignored, not respected. Anyone picking up victims on the road

to Jericho has a moral obligation to ask why there are victims if the road is to be safer.

Fifthly, authentic Christian witness must be enabling people to



be subjects of their own destiny not objects of a promoter's gratification. Equality is indexed to respect for others. Inequality is indexed to indifference to the plight of others.

Generally, mission exists wherever there is affirmation of the quality of life in all its aspects, an experience of community offering a sense of belonging, being at home giving an awareness of and celebrating transcendence.

In the present world such communities will be inter-religious, people of different beliefs,

ideologies, races and cultures in a common struggle to experience the fullness of life both in the material landscapes of economic, political and social networks and particularly in the spiritual landscapes of the human spirit.

To be a Christian is to live dangerously, honestly, freely-to step in the name of love as if you may land on nothing, yet to keep on stepping because the something that sustains you no empire can give and no empire can take away. (Cornel West, Democracy Matters)

My colleague Tony Ryan, (Cashel Archdiocese) on his way to an appointment at Westminster Cathedral sat on a bench in the Cathedral plaza. A homeless man sat beside him. They got talking. The man was from Tipperary. So they had a lot to talk about. As Tony got to leave he offered the man money. The homeless man took out a handful of money from his pocket. Showing it to Tony he said, "these are the people that passed by. Thanks for your time" God is present in small things!

– Fr Bobby Gilmore SSC



Co-founders of the Maynooth Mission to China, Frs. Ned Galvin and John Blowick.

● Next year is the Centenary of the Columban Society, 1918-2018. Twenty of them set off for China with Co-founders, Fr. Ned Galvin from Cork and Fr. John Blowick from Belcarra in Mayo. He was 27 Years of age and had recently resigned his professorship in Maynooth to join the fledgling group. From China they went to the Philippines and Korea years later, eventually to South America and today there are Columban Missionaries in 15 Countries around the world.

To mark the opening of the Centennial Celebrations, The Superior General, Australian Fr. Kevin O' Neill will celebrate a Mass in Dalgan Park, Navan on St Columban's Day November 23rd.

Columban Missionaries Ireland: www.columban.com

Columban Missionaries, Dalgan Park, Navan, Co. Meath C15 AY2Y. Telephone: 046-90-21525



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“Let us be Christ’s, not our own”

– St Columban

We are a congregation of missionary religious women whose commitment to God urges us to cross boundaries of culture, language and belief to proclaim the Good News of Jesus in the ever changing world of our time.

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CAPUCHIN OVERSEAS MISSIONS

AT HEART, SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI was a missionary. He was the first founder of a Religious Order to include a chapter on the Missions in his Rule. He led by example, going himself to Egypt, during the height of the fifth Crusade, in the year 1209, to preach to the Sultan, Malik al-Kamil.

His desire was to reach out to the Muslims promoting peace and reconciliation, “going amongst them” rather than “against them” (as in the Crusades). Francis risked life and limb by going behind enemy lines. He was arrested, beaten and dragged into the presence of the Sultan.

While Francis didn’t convert Malik al-Kamil, their encounter left a mark on both men. It is a wonderful story of fortitude and courage. Francis brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the heart of the Muslim world.

Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ has always been the primary work of the Capuchins. It is at the heart of the Franciscan story.

The Irish Capuchins played their part in the growth of the Church by opening Missions on the west coast of America (1910); South Africa (1929); Zambia



(1930); New Zealand (1958); and South Korea (1986).

Our Missions Today

The good news is that our Missions have thrived and borne fruit by the grace of God. There have been many new indigenous vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the mission territories served by the Capuchins. We have now many young friars who are serving their people, and the Catholic Church is growing. Christian communities are thriving and alive. It is a blessing not only for the Capuchins, but also, for the whole Church of Jesus Christ.

All of this was made possible



by the generosity of our benefactors who, for over a hundred years now, have supported our Missionary endeavours financially and with their prayers. This work is ongoing, and we thank God for the countless people who continue to support our Missionary Apostolate.

Our Mission Office, in Church Street, Dublin 7, continues to be the powerhouse of all our activities. If you would like to support us, we

would be delighted to hear from you.



**Phone: 353 (0)1 873 1022; email: capuchinmissions@gmail.com
Website: www.capuchinmissions.ie**